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ABSTRACT

In spring 1988, a survey was conducted of the 1987 graduates of Prince George's Community College's (PGCC; in Largo, Maryland), occupational programs to assess graduates' success in obtaining full-time employment and their ratings of their preparation for employment. A questionnaire was mailed to all 933 student receiving an associate degree or certificate during fiscal year 1987. Study findings, based on a 57% response rate, included the following: (1) 90% of the graduates were employed, with 78% working full time; (2) 63% were employed full time in jobs related to their studies; (3) only 45% had obtained their current employment after graduation; (4) 87% rated their preparation for employment as "very good" or "good"; (5) full-time employment rates ranged from 36% for Marketing Management majors to 86% for Allied Health majors; (6) Electronics Technology majors gave the fewest high ratings of their preparation for employment, while 100% of the Accounting and Paralegal graduates rated their preparation as "good" or "very good"; and (7) between 1980 and 1984, graduates of nursing, allied health, and office technology programs had the most success obtaining full-time jobs related to their studies. The survey instrument is appended. (AJL)

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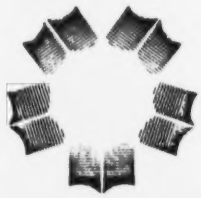
GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT



PRINCE GEORGE'S
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Office of Institutional Research and Analysis

Research Brief RB89-3
October 1988

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PRINCE GEORGE'S COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Office of Institutional Research and Analysis

GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT
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Introduction

A quarter of the credit students enrolled at PGCC in the fall take courses to prepare for immediate entry into the workforce or to update job skills for a position currently held. Students with job-related goals are more likely than other students to complete their community college programs; seven of every ten PGCC graduates have completed occupational programs. What happens to these graduates after they leave the community college? How successful are they in finding full-time employment in jobs related to their PGCC programs? How do the graduates rate their community college preparation for employment?

Methodology

Information on the employment experiences of graduates comes primarily from graduate follow-up surveys conducted annually by the office of institutional research and analysis. Graduates are surveyed the April following their year of graduation. Several of the employment questions are repeated unchanged year after year, allowing trend analysis. Graduates of even-numbered years are surveyed using a standardized questionnaire designed by the Maryland Community College Research Group and administered statewide, permitting comparative analysis.

Occupational programs at the community college are intended to prepare graduates for immediate employment in related jobs. One pertinent outcomes indicator for evaluating such programs is the percentage of graduates employed full-time in jobs related to their PGCC program. This indicator is presented for eleven program areas for each graduating class over the 1980-87 period.

Most Recent Outcomes Indicators

The most recent graduate survey was conducted during the spring of 1988. All 933 students receiving an A.A. degree or certificate during fiscal year 1987 were mailed a four-page questionnaire (a copy is in the appendix). Eighty-eight questionnaire packets were returned undeliverable by the postal service. A total of 415 graduates responded to the mail survey. To obtain further responses, and to check for response bias, nonrespondents were called by telephone. A total of 112

additional responses were obtained by telephone interviews, yielding a total of 527 graduate respondents. Thus, the analysis that follows reflects the experiences and opinions of nearly 57 percent of the 933 graduates of the class of 1987 (62 percent of the graduates with valid addresses).

Nine of ten graduates were employed when surveyed, most full-time (30 or more hours per week). Only three percent were unemployed and seeking work. The overall distribution of employment status for the 522 respondents answering the question was as follows:

Employment Status of PGCC Graduates
Class of 1987, Surveyed in Spring 1988

	Respondents	Percent
Employed full-time	406	78%
Employed part-time	64	12
Unemployed, not seeking work	36	7
Unemployed and seeking work	16	3
Totals	522	100%

Seven of every ten of the employed graduates were working in jobs related to their community college program. Seventy-three percent of the full-time workers, and exactly half of the part-time workers, were in related fields. Overall, 63 percent of the respondents were employed full-time in jobs related to their PGCC programs.

Most of the respondents had obtained their jobs prior to or during their attendance at PGCC. Only 45 percent had obtained their current employment position after graduating from the community college. Among full-time workers, 49 percent of those in jobs related to their college program, and 39 percent of those in unrelated jobs, had obtained their positions after graduation. Perhaps most interesting was the number finding employment while they attended the community college. Over a quarter of the employed respondents (129, or 27 percent) obtained their current job while they were enrolled at PGCC.

The graduates were asked how well PGCC had prepared them for employment, using a five-point scale from "very poor" to "very good" preparation. Excluding those respondents who said there was no connection between their PGCC studies and their jobs, 87 percent of the employed graduates rated their community college preparation for employment "very good" or "good." Twelve percent said their PGCC preparation for the world of work was "fair"; one percent gave a "poor" rating. No graduates rated their

preparation "very poor." Respondents employed full-time in jobs related to their PGCC program were even more favorable:

Graduate Ratings of PGCC Preparation for Employment
Respondents in Jobs Connected to PGCC Studies

Preparation rated:	All Employed Respondents (N = 370)	Employed Full-time in Related Job (N = 275)
Very good	36%	40%
Good	51%	51%
Fair	12%	9%
Poor	1%	<1%
Very Poor	0%	0%

(Responses to a sixth alternative, "no connection between PGCC studies and my job," are excluded.)

Responses to graduate surveys are analyzed by individual programs and incorporated in comprehensive program evaluation reports prepared by the research office. Two employment outcomes indicators are reviewed here for programs with at least 10 respondents to the 1987 graduate survey: the percentage of respondents employed full-time in jobs related to their PGCC program, and the percentage of those employed full-time in related jobs who rated their PGCC preparation "very good" or "good." The full-time related-employment rate ranged from 36 percent for Marketing Management to 86 percent for the programs offered by the Allied Health department. Favorable ratings ranged from 78 percent for Electronics Technology to 100 percent for Accounting and Paralegal respondents:

Full-time Related Employment Rates
and Respondent Ratings of PGCC Employment Preparation

Program	Respondents	Employed Full-time in Related Jobs	Preparation Rated Very Good or Good
Business Mgt.	116	59%	92%
Nursing	55	76%	90%
Computer Technology	43	70%	90%
Accounting	30	67%	100%
Allied Health	28	86%	86%
Electronics Tech.	17	53%	78%
Marketing Mgt.	14	36%	80%
Paralegal	13	54%	100%
Office Technology	12	75%	89%
Criminal Justice	12	67%	86%

Time Series and Peer College Comparisons

Graduate follow-up surveys have been administered statewide since the early 1970's. Biennial surveys designed by the Maryland Community College Research Group and coordinated and processed by the State Board for Community Colleges provide graduate employment information for time series and inter-institutional comparative analyses. The college's research office designs and conducts its own graduate surveys in the "off years." Information on the rate of full-time employment of graduates from community college occupational programs is reported for the classes of 1980-87.

Graduates from PGCC occupational programs have been somewhat more successful in obtaining full-time jobs related to their college studies than Maryland community college occupational graduates as a group. Three-fifths of the occupational program graduates from PGCC have found full-time related employment in recent years, above the statewide average:

Graduate Full-time Employment
in Field of Training
Peer College Comparison

	1980	1982	1984	1986
Prince George's Comm. College	60%	55%	60%	60%
Anne Arundel Comm. College	67%	62%	61%	56%
Catonsville Comm. College	59	62	70	63
Essex Community College	59	59	64	63
Montgomery Comm. College	50	42	49	47
All Maryland comm. colleges	56%	53%	58%	55%

SOURCE: Surveys conducted one year after graduation. Includes A.A. and certificate graduates who reported full-time employment in jobs directly or somewhat related to college program.

Full-time related-employment rates were calculated for graduates of PGCC occupational A.A. degree programs for each year since 1980. The year-by-year results are displayed for each program with 10 or more respondents to at least two of the annual surveys. Graduates of nursing, allied health, and office technology curricula have had the most success obtaining full-time jobs related to their PGCC studies, with at least three-fourths of the respondents so employed in most years. Early Childhood Education, Marketing Management, and Paralegal/Legal Assistant graduates have had relatively less success:

Graduate Respondents Employed Full-time
in Jobs Related to PGCC Program
Graduating Classes of 1980-84

Program	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
Nursing	**77%** (48)	**82%** (72)	**85%** (41)	**88%** (58)	**70%** (64)
Allied Health	**64%** (36)	**67%** (43)	**85%** (26)	**70%** (30)	**70%** (23)
Office Technology	**47%** (15)	**86%** (14)	**58%** (12)	**85%** (13)	**82%** (11)
Accounting	**60%** (45)	**66%** (41)	**54%** (43)	**54%** (39)	**64%** (36)
Business Management	**58%** (85)	**68%** (93)	**58%** (84)	**61%** (69)	**62%** (79)
Marketing Management	**50%** (8)	**45%** (11)	**40%** (10)	**36%** (11)	**56%** (9)
Electronics Technology	**65%** (23)	**57%** (7)	**67%** (15)	**63%** (16)	**67%** (18)
Computer Technology	**62%** (55)	**53%** (49)	**54%** (39)	**59%** (71)	**64%** (72)
Criminal Justice	**65%** (46)	**36%** (33)	**59%** (34)	**43%** (28)	**50%** (26)
Paralegal/Legal Assistant	NA	NA	NA	NA	**44%** (9)
Child Care/Early Child. Ed.	**14%** (7)	**50%** (4)	**20%** (5)	**25%** (4)	**38%** (8)

Graduate Respondents Employed Full-time in Jobs Related to PGCC Program
Graduating Classes of 1985-87

Program	1985	1986	1987
Nursing	82% (62)	75% (52)	76% (55)
Allied Health	79% (28)	83% (18)	86% (28)
Office Technology	75% (16)	71% (17)	75% (12)
Accounting	70% (44)	69% (26)	67% (30)
Business Management	64% (81)	58% (80)	59% (116)
Marketing Management	60% (15)	35% (17)	36% (14)
Electronics Technology	61% (18)	63% (8)	53% (17)
Computer Technology	48% (115)	85% (33)	70% (43)
Criminal Justice	50% (28)	59% (22)	67% (12)
Paralegal/Legal Assistant	55% (22)	50% (12)	54% (13)
Child Care/Early Child. Ed.	20% (10)	45% (11)	75% (4)

SOURCE: Institutional Research annual graduate surveys. Smaller programs with few survey respondents are not shown. Allied Health figures are aggregates summarizing several separate programs. Only A.A. graduates are included. Figures in parentheses are total respondents.

Summary

Graduates of PGCC occupational programs have rated their community college preparation for employment highly. In the most recent survey, 90 percent of the employed graduates rated their PGCC job training "good" or "very good" on a five point scale. Three-fifths of the responding graduates have been employed full-time in jobs related to their college programs. This full-time related-employment rate has been above the statewide average for community college occupational program graduates in all four surveys conducted during the 1980's.

The proportion of graduates securing full-time employment in their field of training varies by program. Though the primary purpose of the college's occupational programs is to prepare students for immediate employment, many decide to continue their education and/or work part-time. When a large share of occupational program students transfer, it may be an indication that a new, transfer-oriented option or program is needed. A recent example is the college's computer program offerings. Due to large numbers of computer students continuing their education, in 1985 the college introduced a new transfer program, Information Systems and Computer Sciences. In subsequent surveys, the percentage of Computer Technology graduates reporting full-time related employment increased dramatically--since the transfer-oriented students had a more appropriate alternative to the occupationally-oriented program. An indicator such as full-time related employment is most meaningful for programs clearly designed for (and enrolling students mostly interested in) immediate employment. Students may also opt for part-time employment, so the more comprehensive individual program evaluations report the employment and continuing education data in complete detail. Continuing education and related part-time employment for FY87 graduates are shown below:

Employment and Continuing Education of FY87 Graduates

	Full-time Related Employment	Part-time Related Employment	Total Continuing Education
Allied Health	86%	7%	14%
Nursing	76%	16%	7%
Office Tech.	75%	8%	25%
Computer Tech.	70%	9%	58%
Accounting	67%	7%	57%
Criminal Justice	67%	0%	46%
Business Mgt.	59%	3%	39%
Paralegal	54%	8%	50%
Electronics	53%	0%	50%
Marketing Mgt.	36%	0%	71%

When part-time workers are included, nine out of ten nursing and allied health program graduates held jobs related to their PGCC programs. Four out of five computer and office technology graduates were employed in related jobs. In the three programs with the lowest rates of full-time related employment, at least half the graduates were continuing their education at senior institutions. Nearly twice as many Marketing Management graduates were continuing their education as had secured full-time related employment, perhaps an indication that the program intent and utilization needs review.

The overall picture from this review of the employment experiences of PGCC occupational program graduates is one of apparent success. Only three percent of the most recent graduating class was unemployed and seeking work, and 90 percent of the employed graduates favorably rated their community college preparation for employment.

Craig A. Clagett
Director
Institutional Research and Analysis

PRINCE GEORGE'S COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Office of Institutional Research and Analysis

CLASS OF 1987 GRADUATE SURVEY

Specific directions are given for completing some of the questions in this questionnaire. Where no directions are given, please circle the number of the most appropriate response. Continue to the next question unless specific directions are given to go elsewhere. This form should take less than ten minutes to complete, and all answers will be strictly confidential. Thank you.

PART I - EMPLOYMENT

A. What is your current employment status:

1. *Employed full-time (30 or more hours per week)*
2. *Employed part-time*
3. *Unemployed and seeking a job—GO TO PART II*
4. *Unemployed and not seeking a job—GO TO PART II*

B. Is your job related to the program you completed at PGCC?

1. *Yes*
2. *No*

C. What is the title of your current position?

_____

D. What is your employer's name and address?

_____

_____

_____

NOTE: The college sometimes contacts employers for further evaluation of its programs. If you would prefer that we *not* contact your employer, check here: ☐

E. When did you obtain your job?
   1. *Before attending PGCC*
   2. *While attending PGCC*
   3. *After graduating from PGCC*

F. Overall, how well did PGCC prepare you for employment?
   1. *Very good preparation*
   2. *Good preparation*
   3. *Fair preparation*
   4. *Poor preparation*
   5. *Very poor preparation*
   6. *No connection between PGCC studies and my job*

PART II - CONTINUING EDUCATION

G. Have you taken courses at another college since graduating from PGCC?
   1. *Yes, full-time (12 or more hours per term)*
   2. *Yes, part-time*
   3. *No – GO TO PART III*

H. Was your program of study related to your PGCC major?
   1. *Yes*
   2. *No*

I. What is the name and location of the school you have most recently attended?
   1. *University of Maryland, College Park*
   2. *University of Maryland, University College*
   3. *Other (please specify name and location):*

_____

J. How well did PGCC prepare you for your studies at the above school?
   1. *Very good preparation*
   2. *Good preparation*
   3. *Fair preparation*
   4. *Poor preparation*
   5. *Very poor preparation*

K. Do you intend to earn a degree at the above named school?
   1. *Yes*
   2. *No*
   3. *Not sure*

L. Listed below are several college attributes. Please rate PGCC and the college you have most recently attended (if different from PGCC) on each attribute using the following scale:

1 = Very good
2 = Good
3 = Fair
4 = Poor
5 = Very poor

Write the number of your rating in the appropriate space. If you have no basis for opinion, leave the space blank:

ATTRIBUTE	PGCC	OTHER COLLEGE
Teaching faculty	_____	_____
Counseling/advisement	_____	_____
Academic standards	_____	_____
Administrative procedures (Registration, etc.)	_____	_____
Student activities (clubs, events)	_____	_____

PART III - GENERAL

M. Would you recommend PGCC to a person seeking to complete the same program that you studied here?

1. *Yes*
2. *No*
3. *Not sure*

N. Would you have attended PGCC if your specific program had not been available?

1. *Yes*
2. *No*
3. *Not sure*

O. What is the highest level of education that your parents attained in school?

	Mother	Father
1. *Less that high school degree*	____	____
2. *High school graduate*	____	____
3. *Some college*	____	____
4. *AA(two-year) degree*	____	____
5. *BA (four-year) degree*	____	____
6. *Master's degree*	____	____
7. *Professional degree*	____	____
8. *Doctorate*	____	____

P. How was your college education paid for? (Please circle all that apply)

1. *Self*
2. *Parent/guardian*
3. *Employers*
4. *Spouse*
5. *Financial Aid (grant or scholarship)*
6. *Student loan*
7. *Other, please specify* _____

Q. To what extent did your attendance at PGCC help you accomplish the following? (For each item, circle the number that most closely reflects your opinion.)

	A Great Deal		A Fair Amount		Not at All
1. *Improve your writing*	5	4	3	2	1
2. *Expand or enhance your appreciation of art, music, or literature*	5	4	3	2	1
3. *Increase your ability to use mathematics*	5	4	3	2	1
4. *Improve your understanding of science and technology*	5	4	3	2	1
5. *Increase your attentiveness to news and world events*	5	4	3	2	1
6. *Improve your ability to understand the logic and merits of arguments*	5	4	3	2	1
7. *Clarify your educational or career goals*	5	4	3	2	1
8. *Enhance your self confidence*	5	4	3	2	1
9. *Improve your reading comprehension*	5	4	3	2	1
10. *Increase your knowledge of other cultures and periods of history*	5	4	3	2	1
11. *Increase your enjoyment of learning*	5	4	3	2	1

R. In what way could your education at PGCC have been improved?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please return this completed questionnaire in the prepaid return envelope provided, or mail to the Office of Institutional Research, Prince George's Community College, Largo, MD 20772. *Thank you* for your assistance!

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